

# GEOTECHNICAL AND STRUCTURES LABORATORY

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1 January 2004

\*Supersedes GSL Standing Operating Procedure No. 1, 16 Aug 01, Entrance/Exit Interviews.

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**Purpose/Applicability:** These policies and procedures were developed to provide an operational guide for all GSL employees (civil servants/contractors; researchers, technicians, and administrative personnel) to follow in the day-to-day execution of their duties.

**Administrative Support to Executive Offices:** The GSL Lab Secretary, Mrs. Gwen Foster, provides an annual schedule indicating the weeks when support to the GSL Executive Office will be provided, if requested, from the administrative staff of the divisions and the TD Offices. When the division or TD administrative person serves at the GSL Executive Office level, someone at branch level serves at her level until she returns. (Under special circumstances, the divisions' and TD Offices' administrative personnel may also serve at the ERDC-Vicksburg Executive Office level; they will be notified by the GSL Lab Secretary if that need arises.)

**Administrative Support to GSL Team Members:** The administrative person in each branch is the first-level coordinator for telephones, training, travel, building maintenance, etc. The division secretary is the next line of support and is the division coordinator for all administrative functions. The GSL Management Support Group is the highest level of support and will provide administrative assistance when it is not available at the branch or division level. Please give your support chain the opportunity to assist you.

**Alternate Work Schedules:** Guidance on the policies and requirements for alternate work schedules (flex time, compressed schedules, etc.) are found in SR 690-1-12, Civilian Personnel-Alternate Work Schedules. Your branch admin can provide you a copy. It is not located on the ERDC Intranet because it applies only to the ERDC-Vicksburg site.

**Area of Responsibility (AOR) Notifications:** When our team members travel, we must notify the appropriate division/district of our presence (per ER 5-1-10). The process and wording for the notification are the same whether for Continental or Outside Continental United States (CONUS or OCONUS) travel ([Appendixes A](#) and [B](#)). These notifications are to be sent out only by the division secretaries.

**Awards:** There are three types of awards: monetary, honorary, and time-off. References include HR Reg 672-1-1 (Decorations, Awards, and Honors), CR 690-1-1 (Lab Personnel Management Demonstration Project), Policy Memo #3 (ERDC Monetary Awards), and others. Some awards can be given at any time of year, some are linked to the performance rating period, and some to scheduled ERDC events such as Engineer Day. Additional information is available at <https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/pubs/memos/policies.htm> for ERDC monetary awards and at <https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/training/awards/awards.htm> for professional development and honorary awards.

a. Mr. Milton Myers, GSL Executive Office, is an excellent resource for honorary award preparation. All award nominations, whether monetary, government honorary, or non-government honorary, must be routed through Ms. Rae Eikert, GSL Executive Office Management Support Group. She must be aware of all awards so that GSL gets appropriate recognition on data-calls. For monetary awards, she must actually process them and prepare the Request for Personnel Action. For honorary awards, she will not delay them, but will merely

retain a copy. When preparing an award nomination, coordinate with Ms. Eikert to ensure you provide her the proper forms and an electronic Microsoft Word copy of the justification.

b. When nominating someone from another organization (whether another branch/division/lab), you must obtain an e-mail approval from that person's supervisor.

c. Awards cannot be paid from project funds unless the sponsor's funding document specifically states so.

d. Monetary awards must be submitted, through the chain of command, and approved within 30 calendar days after the act, service, or achievement to be recognized. Exceptions to the time limits may be granted only by written approval from the Commander, ERDC. Honorary awards to be approved by USACE or higher require 90 to 120 days. Although the announcement of a patent award can be found on the Internet within days of the approval, the final award cannot be prepared until receipt of the announcement letter from HQ, USACE, which is sent through the ERDC Office of Counsel, to the Executive Office, GSL.

**Briefings:** All briefings are to be pre-briefed at least to the branch chief level (with the division chief being informed of the time of pre-briefing) prior to presentation to other agencies. The pre-briefing will be conducted by the person who will be the presenter, using the actual slides/PowerPoint presentation. Consider providing handouts for the visitors, which are also approved by the same person who approved the briefing. When briefing other agencies, a GSL member of the same or one level lower than the person being briefed should accompany the briefer.

**Broad Agency Announcement (BAA):** BAAs are competitive solicitations for research contracts offered through a Contracting Web site. When an organization has something to offer the government, they reply to a BAA. The Vicksburg Consolidated Contracting Office (VCCO) sends these documents to the appropriate Lab Executive Office. In GSL, the Deputy Director's secretary logs them in and issues them to the appropriate division chief. The division secretary logs them in and forwards them, through channels, to the Principal Investigator (PI) assigned by the division chief to evaluate it. The [evaluation](#) must be typed (handwritten is not acceptable). [Hypertext link is to MS Word document, which may be saved to your computer and re-used.] Both pre-proposals and proposals require a team of three to evaluate them, and the evaluators' names must be typed below the signature. When the evaluation has been typed, signed, and a copy of the appropriate PR&C attached, the PI should return it up the chain for proper log-out. The Division Chief will sign the BAA evaluation prior to forwarding it to the Director's Office. After the Director has signed, the appropriate division secretary will have it mailed or hand-carried to VCCO.

**Calendaring:** See [Scheduling](#).

**CEFMS:** This acronym stands for Corps of Engineers Financial Management System. For instructions on obtaining userid and smart card, please see [Appendix C](#) [chgd 17 Feb 04].

**Chain of Command:** An Excel spreadsheet is distributed at least quarterly by Ms. Eikert, GSL Executive Office MSG, which tells every GSL team member who is in their chain of supervision, i.e., their supervisor, and that person's supervisor—two levels above the employee. This term is also referred to when seeking approvals. It means the employee must go through his/her supervisor, who then goes up the chain until the one with the final authority has approved the document/issue. GSL team members should check with branch or division administrative personnel, the Lab Secretary, or their supervisor if in doubt of the proper chain of command for the particular document/issue they are working.

## **Communications Resources (Telephones, etc.):**

a. **Proper Use.** GSL team members should read ERDC Policy Memo #2, "Ethical Uses of Communication Resources," dated 14 Apr 00 (see [Appendix D](#)), concerning the proper use of communication resources. Federal communications resources include government-owned and government-leased telephones, facsimile machines, electronic mail (e-mail), and other access to the Internet. Authorized purposes may include personal use as permitted by the Commander, ERDC, within specified parameters.

(1) "Official Use" is easy to determine in most circumstances. "Authorized Purposes" is a concept that recognizes the reality of the workplace and the needs of employees. While employees are at their desk, they often have need to access information to communicate with family and others concerning their non-work life. In addition to using the telephone, they can now engage in these types of personal communication by e-mail and access to the Internet on their personal time (before and after work, during lunch).

(2) "Ethical Use" includes the following:

(a) Use of the Internet for professional development purposes, subject to ensuring that your primary duties and mission are accomplished.

(b) Official electronic mail.

(c) Access and use of Internet resources for personal reasons such as routine e-mail correspondence with your children away at college, reading business magazines, financial transactions, checking stock quotes; however you may do this only during breaks, lunch periods, and before and after work hours.

(3) "Unethical Use" includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) Sending chain letters or harassing messages.

(b) Browsing sexually oriented sites (including downloading sexually oriented material).

(c) Forwarding or sending inappropriate/unethical jokes, articles, etc., via e-mail.

(d) Online gambling, network gaming, downloading music files from peer to peer sites (P2P).

(e) Sending classified information via unclassified e-mail.

b. **Repairs.** If your telephone is out of order or there is static on the line, go to another working telephone and call the WES Operator; give her your name, your telephone number, and your room and building numbers. She will place a trouble ticket report for you and have your phone line repaired. This type of telephone repair does not need to go through your telephone coordination chain.

c. **New or Changed Services.** Employees who need to obtain new or changed telephone service, pagers, cell phones, BlackBerry<sup>TM</sup> hand-helds, etc., should contact their branch telephone coordinator. She will submit the work order to the division coordinator. After ensuring that all necessary information is addressed (i.e., building number, room number, whether the line is primary or secondary, if employee is government or contractor, office symbol, type of instrument, whether FTS and Audix are required), the work order will be submitted to the GSL coordinator, who will submit it to the Information Technology Laboratory (ITL) Communications Coordinator. (The division secretary will also copy-furnish Ms. Cheri Loden, Executive Office Contractor, for input to GSL and Alpha/Mail Stop Rosters and Ms. Elizabeth McDevitt, GSD, or Mr. Pete Warnock, ESMD Contractor, so they will know when GSL team members have changed rooms in case their computers need to be reset.) Acquisition of a BlackBerry<sup>TM</sup> must be approved by the division chief. Team members may contact ITL to inquire about the cell phone contracts in effect at WES to decide which contract best suits their mission; however, the actual request must go through the telephone coordination chain. If GSL team members contact ITL directly for phone services without going through this chain, ITL will return the request to GSL with no action. Any cellular phones or cellular accessories not included in the contract cost must be purchased separately on an IMPAC VISA Card. The cellular phone and accessories must be purchased through the cellular service rep (e.g., AT&T, Cingular). The rep will coordinate the old and new cell phone changeover. Contact your Branch Communications Coordinator for information and the office request; contact your office VISA cardholder for the purchase.

d. **DSN Telephone Service.** ERDC at the Vicksburg site added the Defense Switched Network (DSN) telephone service to the telephone system. The DSN telephone network is a private network connecting government sites. All ERDC employees at Vicksburg now have a DSN number that they can distribute to other government sites that have DSN. The telephone number consists of "446" plus the existing four-digit extension. For example, a valid DSN number at the Vicksburg site is 446-2207. To call an off-site DSN number from ERDC at Vicksburg, dial the access number ("87") plus the DSN number. A variable usage charge will be associated with each call, depending on location called and time of day.

**Condolence Letters:** If an immediate family member of a GSL employee dies, a condolence letter is sent to the employee. If an employee dies, the letter is sent to the spouse or other family member. These letters are prepared with information provided by the employee's supervisor. The division secretary, TD administrative person, or Lab Secretary (as appropriate) is responsible for

- a. Preparing a condolence letter for signature by the Commander or ERDC Director (whoever is in that day); letter must be hand-carried through the chain of command for same-day issuance.
- b. Preparing a condolence letter for signature by the Director, GSL; letter should be sent electronically to Mrs. Foster, GSL Executive Office.
- c. Sending e-mail to DLL-CEERD-GSL with service and memorial information. (Request Mr. David Downey, Information Technology Laboratory, ext 3676, to temporarily remove the name of the family member from this listing. By adding Mr. Downey as a BCF, he will then know to re-list that name.)
- d. Posting pertinent information on the Outlook public folder, Bulletin Classifieds and Announcements.

**Conference Attendance Request Process:** Conference announcements are distributed lab-wide by the GSL Laboratory Secretary, Mrs. Gwen Foster. Provide conference notices to her, and she will distribute them. To request permission to attend a conference, forward the announcement e-mail to your supervisor, providing a justification (chair a session, present a paper, participate in poster session, etc.). Also state whether or not frequent flyer points will be used to obtain airline tickets. The supervisor will forward your e-mail to the division secretary or TD administrative person with a recommendation for approval or disapproval. The admin person will consolidate requests, obtain division chief/TD approval, and respond to the employees, supervisors, Travel Office, and Lab Secretary with the consolidated list.

**Congressional Contacts:** Under the provisions of CR 1-1-1 (Congressional Contacts), all Congressional contacts must be reported within 72 hours to Mr. Milt L. Seekins, ERDC Deputy Director's Office, (703) 428-6613. If you are contacted by a Congressional staffer, go through your chain of command, and your division chief will contact Mr. Seekins. He will work with the Executive Office and individual labs to develop a response to the Congressional contact.

**Contact with Foreign Countries:** There are special requirements for traveling to several countries and even requirements for contacting a number of countries. Ms. Rachael Cook, ERDC-WES Travel Office, ext 2378, has the most recent information for travel to foreign countries. Mr. Phillip Stewart, ERDC-WES Office of Programs, ext 4113, has the most recent information for contact with foreign countries, specifically the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, and Mexico.

**Correspondence:** Detailed instructions on use of letterhead, signature authority, proposal limits, reading files, etc., can be found at [Appendix E](#).

**Dress Code:** There is no "dress code" per se. Employees are expected to comply with reasonable dress and grooming standards based on comfort, productivity, health, hygiene, safety, and type of position occupied. When representing GSL and ERDC, team members should consider the impression their dress will make on visitors to GSL or other participants of



conferences attended by GSL team members. For most conferences, a sports coat, tie, and dress shoes (or lady's equivalent) are appropriate.

**E-Mail:** E-mail is correspondence. The same basic rules apply: obtain review or approval, particularly when corresponding (by e-mail) with other agencies. Some of the following points come from the ERDC-IM communications working group:

- a. Assume all e-mails are public.
- b. Be aware that although an e-mail may be deleted from the mailbox, the message may still be stored on servers and daily, weekly, or monthly back-up tapes.
- c. E-mail is not the place to discuss sensitive issues—hiring, firing, etc.
- d. Provide a succinct and useful subject line (and include suspense date).
- e. If the message is about setting up a meeting, don't bury that fact in a later paragraph. The date and time should be in the subject. (Outlook Calendar is a better vehicle for setting up appointments.)
- f. Avoid unusual fonts, colors, and typeface styles—not every mailer displays these, and they may change the meaning or feel of your message (e.g., all boldface may be construed as “yelling”). Also, fancy graphics/backgrounds are distracting, bothersome, and space-consuming.
- g. Use “Out of Office” feature when appropriate.

**Employment Verification:** Department of the Army employees are to provide organizations that need to verify their employment information for purposes of mortgage applications, reference checks, loan applications, apartment leases, etc., with The Work Number for Everyone® which is an automated verification service supplying this information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When employees fill out applications, they should provide the Web address [www.theworknumber.com](http://www.theworknumber.com). GSL team members should familiarize themselves with this service (detailed brochure available at <http://cpol.army.mil/library/benefits/talx>). You may also talk with a Work Number Customer Service Representative at 1-800-996-7566 for further information.

**Engineer and Scientist Paneling Process** (formerly called PEC Panel): Links to CR 690-1-4, Research and Development Personnel Evaluation, and changes can be found at <https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/pubs/regs/index.htm>. GSL career or career-conditional employees engaged in research (functional code 11) or development (functional code 13) who are in the DB-IV pay band should familiarize themselves with CR-690-1-4. This regulation standardizes guidelines across all ERDC Laboratories and implements the non-competitive promotion exceptions referenced in ER 690-1-1203, Corporate and Selection Recruitment. A timeline for packages to be submitted will be established each time a paneling process is announced. Nine copies of the final package to be submitted should be delivered to the GSL Executive Office for distribution to the ERDC Director and the Directors of CERL, TEC, CRREL, EL, CHL, ITL, GSL, and the employee/candidate. Make more copies if others in the employee's chain of supervision would like a copy. A completed package requires much work. It

is recommended that employees keep their packages up-to-date with publications, training/education, and projects.

## **Entrance and Exit Procedures:**

### **a. Entrance/Inprocessing.**

(1) All new employees (civilian, military, contractor, student) will be instructed to go to Room 416 in the Casagrande Building (Bldg 3396) and meet Ms. Rae Eikert. She needs different information from each type employee for the GSL personnel databases. In addition, each employee will complete ERDC Form 25-E, Emergency Contact Information. Ms. Eikert will maintain a laboratory copy, and the branch admin person will maintain a branch copy. Ms. Eikert will provide all new employees with the Web site for this SOP, and civilians will be given two more booklets that contain helpful information on federal employee pay and benefits. There is also an Orientation Program for New Employees, which can be accessed through the Training link at <https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil>.

(2) Supervisors will complete the Employee Orientation Checklist that the CPAC furnished the new employee and will maintain the completed form on file. They will also conduct all new government employees on a tour of GSL and introduce them to the TDs, both division chiefs, and all branch chiefs (these introductions may take place at the “Big Monthly Staff Meeting” held the second Monday of each month). In addition, every new person in GSL whether government employee, contractor, military personnel, student, etc., will be scheduled for an office visit with the Director, Deputy Director, and their own division chief within 3 weeks of coming onboard.

(3) The supervisor will assign the newcomer both a sponsor and a mentor. The sponsor will help the new employee to understand the “government way” of doing business. Be sure the new team member has read and understood the packet of information given to them by CPAC (health and life insurance sign-ups have suspenses that cannot be missed). The sponsor will also introduce them to others in the organization (including other branches where their work will intersect) and smooth the way for the newcomer to become a productive member of the GSL team. The ERDC Sponsorship Program regulation is CR 600-1-1 and can be found at <https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/training/mentoring.htm>. The mentor will be a senior member of the same organization in the same area of expertise who will help the new employee grow within the field. An ERDC publication that is coming soon will more clearly delineate the responsibilities of a mentor.

(4) The GSL Executive Office will obtain a digital photo and short bio on all new employees during the first 2 weeks on duty.

### **b. Exit/Outprocessing.**

(1) Employees (civilian, military, contractor, student, etc.) who depart from GSL for any reason must go through the outprocessing procedures contained in CR 690-1-5 (<https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/pubs/regs/index.htm>). Ms. Eikert will provide the appropriate form (ERDC Form 29-D-E) to the employee. The outgoing employee’s first line of

assistance should be the branch administrative person (she knows who maintains the property lists, keys, classified documents, etc.) and will need separate information from the employee about telephones, cell phones, calling cards. After completion and supervisory review, the form will be provided to Ms. Eikert for retention.

(2) All outgoing employees will schedule an exit interview with their branch and division chiefs and the GSL Executive Office.

(3) Be aware that the retirement process should be started 90 to 120 days prior to the effective retirement date. (And, as a side-note, some awards that may be appropriate for a retiring team member require 90 to 120 days to process.) Please do not keep your retirement date a secret; tell your supervisor, secretary, and Ms. Eikert as soon as you start your retirement process.

**ERDC Information:** A most helpful Web site is <https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil>. GSL team members who check that site can find strategic plans, information on organizations and people, news and events, the data warehouse, CEFMS, PROMIS, and the ERDC Performance Reviews for the last 2 fiscal years. Also, links to all ERDC locations are there, in addition to many other benefits. It has an excellent Subject Index that links you to training, travel, property, etc. When seeking information, try this Web site first. The 2002/2003 issues of the ERDC Information Bulletin (<https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/pao/ERDCBulletin/index.htm>) also contain a listing of other useful Web sites and telephone numbers.

**GSL Main Conference Room (Casagrande) – Equipment Instructions:** See [Appendix F](#) for full instructions on using the equipment (Smart Board, Projector, etc.) in the GSL Main Conference Room.

**Individual Development Plan (IDP):** IDPs must be maintained for all permanent employees. As a minimum, IDPs will be reviewed and discussed with each employee in conjunction with the initial and mid-point performance counseling sessions. Any professional certifications or registrations that are due in the coming year should also be documented on the IDP. ERDC managers will be held accountable in their supervisory performance elements for implementing this ERDC policy. Development of the IDP must be a joint effort between supervisor and employee, encouraging open dialogue to discuss the linkage between organizational and individual needs. ENG Form 5055 is the planning document to ensure the ERDC staff maintains the capability to effectively carry out its mission, both current and future. As much information as possible must be entered on the form: title, location, cost of training, and estimate of TDY costs.

**Information Paper Format:** See [Figure 1](#) for instructions for information papers to be submitted to higher headquarters and other agencies (unless the receiving agency provides a different format).

**Light Refreshments Policy:** ERDC Policy Memo No. 9 (2 Feb 04) states that light refreshments are defined in the JTR as morning, afternoon, or evening breaks; exclude alcoholic

beverages; and include coffee, tea, milk, juice, soft drinks, donuts, bagels, fruit, pretzels, cookies, chips, muffins, and similar items.

a. ERDC policy allows using appropriated funds to purchase light refreshments at any government-sponsored conference only for those attendees who are on TDY (unless some other source of authority allows for the provision of food at government expense). There is no limitation on the type of conference or the number of attendees. Departmental funds may be used when the conference is a general-purpose function. Project funds may be used when the scope of the conference is limited to the project whose funds are to be used to purchase the refreshments and the project appropriation permits such use. Appropriated funds may be used to purchase light refreshments for conferences (including some conferences with Federal employees not in a travel status or non-Federal attendees) if auditable documentation can support that light refreshments are provided only to the Federal employees in a travel status. Regularly scheduled training conducted at a government or commercial training facility does not qualify for the purchase of light refreshments.

b. Appropriated funds can also be used, regardless of travel status, when the cost of the food or beverages is an inseparable portion of the meeting, conference, training registration, or attendance fee. One example is a multiple-day conference in which the cost of the conference room includes the light refreshments and the cost is not broken out in the billing. A second example is a meeting that includes a luncheon speaker, and the speaker is a required event for that meeting.

c. Use of light refreshments paid for out of appropriated funds requires a justification and approval. The justification will be sent by e-mail (at least 1 week prior to the start of the meeting/conference) from the branch chief through the division chief to the GSL Deputy Director. Approval will be sent by return e-mail. Light refreshments will not be purchased with appropriated funds without approval. The justification should include the funds used (work item number, fiscal year, and appropriation), a description of the meeting/conference, the total number of people invited to the meeting/conference, whether all of attendees are/are not Federal employees in travel status, an estimate of the cost per person per day, and a short justification (one or two sentences). If the estimated cost per person per day exceeds 25% of the meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) rate, the justification should address that aspect as well. (The M&IE rate for Vicksburg is \$30; \$7.50 is 25%.)

d. For situations in which light refreshments are desired but the conditions of this policy cannot be met, there is still the option of purchasing them with personal funds and charging a fee at the meeting, conference, or training event. According to the JTR: "Charges/fees for light refreshments are reimbursable to travelers only when included as part of the conference or meeting registration fee." In such situations, the attendees (both those in and not in a travel status) pay for the refreshments, but those individuals in a travel status can be reimbursed on their travel vouchers if the charge is included as part of the registration fee. Unlike the situation discussed in paragraph b, the charge is separable from the event fee.

**Mail Stops:** Ms. Cheri Loden maintains a listing that contains information on all GSL employees. While the GSL Route Slip shows the organization and employee, it does not show building number. The Mail Stop List contains building numbers, room numbers, office symbols,

and extensions for each employee. The Mailstop/Alpha Listing can be obtained from Ms. Loden or your administrative person.

**Open Door Policy:** If GSL team members have a concern they need to address, their first stop should be their first-line supervisor. If they do not feel that their needs have been addressed, or if the concern is with the first-line supervisor, then they should follow their chain of command and let their chain have the opportunity to help them. If, however, they are uncomfortable doing that, they may ask for an open door appointment with any level of their chain of command. When making this appointment, it is not necessary to tell the secretary the exact nature of the appointment; merely request to make an Open Door appointment and that will be honored.

**Organization Charts:** Updated organization charts for ERDC, and for separate offices and labs (including GSL), can be found at [https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/rm/org\\_chart.htm](https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/rm/org_chart.htm). Click under “Living Chart” to open the file in MS Word format; then, follow the page link to retrieve the GSL chart (pages 14-15 in 26 Nov 03 version).

**Outlook Access:** Access to Outlook is connected to the UPASS userid. Therefore, a completed “System User-ID and Password Administration User-ID Application” form ([PDF](#); [MS Word](#)) must be faxed to Abbrica Smith, at ext 4415. When userid is obtained, a completed ERDC Form 30-E, “Request for CEFMS Access” ([PDF](#); [MS Word](#)) must be faxed to Sharon McMillian, ext 4415. The ERDC Form 30-E must be filled out whether or not the employee is going to be using CEFMS. Mark the functions the employee needs (or make the statement “No CEFMS requirements”) and obtain supervisor’s approval. (When using the above MS Word links, save to hard-drive prior to filling out. The ERDC form can also be accessed through FormFlow.) In addition, when making the first communications request for a new employee (whether civilian, military, contractor, or student), a statement must be included as to whether or not this process has taken place.

### **Overtime Policies:**

- a. Procedures for the Assignment of Overtime and the requirement for Summary Overtime Request Records are found in CP 600-1-1. The cumulative/monthly overtime summary (ERDC Form 16-E) is to be provided to Ms. Eikert, who will forward a consolidated GSL package to AFGE.
- b. An excellent explanation of Overtime and the Fair Labor Standards Act (GS7-12) is at [Appendix H](#). This includes how to figure out who can earn overtime on travel and when.
- c. All overtime/comptime requests bringing the employee over 250 hours for the leave year must be requested by the division chief and approved by the GSL Director. All overtime requests must state the cumulative number of overtime/comp hours earned thus far for the employee.
- d. Overtime/comptime requests for employees in the grade of DB-04 or above must be requested by the division chief and approved by the GSL Director.

**Personnel:** Ms. Eikert is the GSL point of contact for personnel issues. The Army Benefits Center (ABC) is the centralized benefits service. This is state-of-the-art technology that automates functions related to benefits and entitlements. Employees are to be self-sufficient in managing their Federal benefits and entitlements, including information and processing for Federal Employees' Health Benefits, Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance, the Thrift Savings Plan, retirement, and survivor benefits (death and dismemberment claims). The Web site is <https://www.abc.army.mil>. Your original password is your SSN, and you follow the on-screen instructions to establish your PIN. The phone number is 1-877-276-9287.

**Pre-Deployment and Post-Deployment Checklists:** Ms. Eikert has the checklists and forms to be filled out prior to deployment either for civil disaster response or mobilization in support of the military. Some of these forms will protect your family; some will ensure that you continue to be paid.

**Project Management Plan:** The USACE Project Management Business Process (PMBP) is the fundamental business process used to deliver quality projects and services. The heart of the PMBP is project-focused teamwork, which involves assembling multi-disciplined Project Delivery Teams (PDTs), unlimited by geography or organizational boundaries, to best meet the customers' needs. ERDC has developed a guide for implementing the USACE PMBP. The guide can be found at <https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/exec/pmbp/taskforce/plan.htm>. GSL has also posted, at <https://gslinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/docs/guidepmp.doc> a document that contains guidance for implementing GSL-specific requirements for the development and approval of PMPs. The normal-face text is taken from the ERDC PMBP Guide and applies to all of ERDC. The bold italicized text is GSL-specific guidance.

**Property:** Each team member is responsible for government property and will sign a sub-hand receipt accepting/acknowledging that responsibility. For some members, this will involve only the monitor, CPU, and printer equipment in their own offices. For others, it will include field investigation equipment and/or equipment at other locations. All hand receipt holders (supervisors/branch chiefs) are responsible for all equipment on their hand receipts. They have agents who help them manage this property. Once the property is picked up in APPMS (Army Personal Property Management System), it can be easily tracked, but only as long as that agent is notified whenever a piece of equipment is moved. For example, if an employee's monitor quits and is swapped for a borrowed one from Ms. Elizabeth McDevitt or Mr. Pete Warnock, the hand receipt agent must be told, otherwise the employee sub-hand receipt is not changed and the employee remains responsible for that monitor. In addition, when a piece of equipment (for example, a small printer from Office Max) is purchased on an employee's government IMPAC VISA card, the employee must verify with the hand receipt agent whether it needs to be picked up on Property. When the annual PR&C audit is conducted, if the item was supposed to be picked up on Property but was not, and the IMPAC cardholder cannot now put their hands on it or prove which one it was (because the serial number was never recorded), the cardholder can be found financially liable for it. Employees should know who their hand receipt agents are and should be diligent in coordinating with them. A detailed set of instructions is at [Appendix G](#).

**Proposals:** See [Appendix I](#) for Proposals for Reimbursable Work. For signature levels, the basics are these:



- a. \$0-500,000 - branch chief can sign.
- b. \$500,001 - \$1,000,000 - division chief can sign.
- c. \$1,000,001 and up - laboratory director signs.

Be sure to copy furnish all upward levels and technical directors. All correspondence that follows the initial proposal will also be signed by the same person who signed the original. If the division chief signed the proposal, then the division chief signs the interim reports, draft reports, final reports, etc. On proposals going to military agencies, remember to use the FOR THE DIRECTOR authority line on GSL letterhead when the proposal is not signed by the laboratory director.

**Publishing and Printing:** [Center Regulation 25-30-1](#) outlines the policy, responsibility, procedures, and standards for preparation, review, production, and distribution of ERDC technical publications.

**Review/Approval of Publications:** The GSL Test Form 2 will be used to obtain review and approval of all GSL publications. (This is a “test” form; suggestions for improvements should be given to your division secretary.) This form is included as [Figure 2](#) and may be saved to your hard-drive for use. All applicable sections of this form must be completed. By doing so, data calls at the end of fiscal quarters can be answered without polling every team member. Submitted publications, whatever type they are, need to have an acknowledgment and distribution statement in the publication. (NOTE: Not all abstracts result in papers; some abstracts are published as is and, therefore, must have the acknowledgment.)

a. All publications must go through the division chief and be approved at the Laboratory level. If the division chief is absent, the acting may sign; however, the publication must still go through the division secretary for control prior to submission to the Director, and the document must be returned to the division secretary prior to return to the author. When appropriate, the division secretary will make copies for file and the Public Affairs Office. If a contract employee is the only author, but the organization listed is ERDC or the work was done under a contract with us, then the paper must go through our review process and must also have sponsor’s approval. If the primary author is a non-ERDC agency employee and the secondary authors are ERDC employees, the paper must go through our review process. If the primary author is another ERDC employee (but non-GSL), the other lab’s review process is sufficient for review purposes, but the GSL employee should provide a copy of the publication to the division secretary for data-call purposes.

b. Team members must complete their publications in a timely manner so as to provide enough time for two reviewers to make comments (and revisions); obtain branch and division chief approvals; allow for administrative proofing of the final publication (and corrections); obtain Executive Office approval; and return to team member for submission to publisher/conference organizer. If the publication is a technical report, the ITL Editor’s review and approval will be obtained prior to submission to the GSL Director. (Additional information on processing ERDC technical publications is available in [Center Regulation 25-30-1](#).)

c. For refereed papers, after publication, the author team will be awarded a combined \$500 with no one author receiving more than \$250 (as is the case with patent awards). The branch chief will decide the ratio based on known effort.

d. Presentations, with no written product, do not need the two reviewers; however, for accountability and for ERDC credit, the form must still be prepared and branch and division chief approval obtained. It need not go to the GSL Director or Public Affairs Office.

**Scheduling/Calendar:** To schedule a meeting, use the Outlook Calendar function. Administrative personnel know how to use this extremely easy tool and can show team members how to use it. Using this feature, it is easy to tell at a glance if requested attendees are available at the specified time. If they are not, adjust the time of the meeting until all attendees are clear. If they are available, send the appointment message. Upon receipt of an appointment message, click on Accept and Send, and the initiator will receive confirmation of attendance and the appointment will post to your calendar. Additionally, the appointment can be set with a Reminder message for 5, 15, 30 minutes so that a small pop-up window will appear as a reminder of the message just prior to the meeting. Use of this tool minimizes phone calls and cross-coordination. Leave, TDY, or appointments not set up on Outlook can be posted so that others who are setting up meetings can check your availability. Others can view only the availability, not subject or attendees. Outlook can also schedule recurring meetings. This is extremely useful for leaders of Project Delivery Teams (PDTs) who need to have weekly meetings with all team members. It drastically reduces the number of phone calls and e-mails previously required to set up appointments.

**Shipping:** There is no blanket PR&C for all GSL overnight shipping. It has been left to the discretion of the individual branch chiefs whether a blanket PR&C will be set up for that branch or whether (and when) an individual PR&C using project funds should be set up for shipping an individual item. ERDC Form 52-E, must be completed, including circling “yes” or “no” to indicate if the shipment is a Classified or Hazardous shipment and the signature in block 5. Items to be shipped must be at the Shipping Office prior to 1330 each day for shipment that day. Contact your administrative person if you need to ship an item.

**Significant Accomplishments Form:** Throughout the year, GSL receives data calls for various pieces of information. All of the publications data calls can be answered using information already collected on the [Publication Review/Approval Form](#). However, there are many other items of interest. The Significant Accomplishments Form was designed to fulfill that need. If team members keep a few copies of this form in their desk to fill out and give to their administrative person when an event happens, our laboratory can get the appropriate credit at the appropriate time without having to task team members for information throughout the year. This form is located at [Figure 3](#). (In the near future, we will have a database that will be accessible through the GSL Intranet. Team members will receive a quarterly reminder to update their information.)

**Teleconferencing:** Information on scheduling and using the ERDC Teleconference Bridge is now available at <https://erdcinfo.erdc.usace.army.mil/im/teleconbridge/index.htm>. Questions



regarding the information on that Web page should be directed to the ITL-Hanover Help Desk at 603-646-HELP (4357).

**Timekeeping:** It is the employees' responsibility to provide timekeepers with their work schedules, hours worked, type of leave to be charged, and the work item codes that are to be charged. If employees do not have a work item code, they must contact their supervisors to obtain one. Ensure the timesheet is completed each day. If TDY or leave is scheduled during the pay period, post it. Besides the 26 pay periods each year, there are usually 6 early labor uploads during a pay year. Timesheets must be kept current, and timekeepers must have work item codes in enough time to input labor purchase request, obtain approval, obtain labor charge code, and post time.

**Training:** Mrs. Sharon McBride, GSL Executive Office MSG, is the GSL Training Coordinator. The division secretary is the division training coordinator. The branch administrative person is the branch training coordinator. Due to the numerous changes to the training system, payment procedures, and vendors, please contact your branch training coordinator prior to committing to training. If the branch training coordinator is unavailable, contact the division training coordinator. Please give your chain of support the opportunity to help before going to the GSL training coordinator. A short checklist on training is at [Appendix J](#).

**Travel:** Each branch has a travel coordinator, usually the primary branch administrative person. All travel vouchers will be maintained by the travel approver. More guidance on travel can be found at <https://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/lm/travel/index.htm> and in [Appendixes A](#) and [B](#). Travel Card POCs for GSL are as follows: Primary - Ms. Lynette O'Neal, ext 2429; Alternate - Ms. Cecilia Cole, ext 2597.

## **Visitors:**

a. **Visiting Other Agencies.** Team members must contact the person being visited well in advance of the visit to ensure current rules for that installation are being followed. For installation clearances, ERDC Form 22-E (available through Delrina Formfiller) must be provided to ERDC Security, for forwarding to the Security Office of the installation being visited. Also, the Pentagon is strictly enforcing its policy for access to the building; there are many variables. Do not assume that a government identification card guarantees access.

b. **Others Visiting ERDC-WES.** When a visit to GSL is first contemplated, notify the Security and the Public Affairs offices ([Bobby.G.Sanders@erd.usace.army.mil](mailto:Bobby.G.Sanders@erd.usace.army.mil) and [Visitors@wes.army.mil](mailto:Visitors@wes.army.mil)). Specific questions need to be answered, including who, what, why, when, where, and whether the visitor is a US Citizen. In addition, whenever visitors are coming—whether for a class or a visit—notify your chain of supervision up to the GSL Director. (This will enable them to attend and learn more about your work.) You may copy furnish them on your message to Security and Public Affairs. Also, notify the branch chief and administrative person in the area of the conference room to be used, to inform them that strangers will be in their areas.

c. **Foreign Nationals Visiting ERDC-WES.** There are many more regulations covering visits by non-US citizens. As soon as a visit is planned for a non-US citizen, contact Mrs. Linda McGowan, Security Office, ext 2776. She will guide you through the process. It is essential that Security and Public Affairs Office protocols are strictly followed to secure permission for visits by foreign nationals, particularly government officials. The required lead-time for foreign national meeting or visitor requests to the Office of the Secretary of Defense is 30 days for most nationalities, and some require more. (For example, People's Republic of China requests currently require a minimum lead-time of 75 days.) If protocols are not observed, well enough in advance to accommodate staffing actions through the chain of authority (including several approvals in Washington, DC, where no substitute signers are allowed), it is virtually certain that it will not be possible to meet with the visitors, even if the meeting location is not on the ERDC-Vicksburg reservation.

d. **Agenda.** The Public Affairs Office has prepared an SOP for handling visitors. This SOP is available from PAO upon request. When preparing an agenda that is totally within GSL, it is not necessary to coordinate the agenda through PAO; however, be aware that you must do all coordination (conference rooms, welcomes and overviews by Executive Office personnel, etc.). In such cases, PAO will act in an advisory capacity, if requested. If an agenda involves more than one laboratory, PAO will coordinate the agenda and be the sole point of contact between laboratories. Do not do your own coordination with other laboratories. Experience has shown that is a recipe for disaster.

e. **Network Connection.** Only Corps of Engineers employees are allowed to connect a laptop or pc to the ERD network. When a visitor from another organization needs to have access to the network/Internet, there are two methods:

(1) If visitors are government employees from outside of WES but have a UPASS userid and remote dial-in password (such as a Corps employee), an IASO can connect them to the wireless network with VPN (with the CEEIS profile so that they may access their email) and have access to the CEEIS network and the Internet.

(2) If visitors are not government employees, an IASO can connect them to the Internet through the wireless network and a Microsoft PPTP Connection for Visitors. This will allow access to the Internet but not the WES network.

Notify Elizabeth McDevitt (ext 2870), Pete Warnock (ext. 2716), or Colin Leach (ext 3891) of all visitors so they may inform the IAT, so that the system can be scanned for any vulnerabilities. Any non-ERDC visitors should bring their accreditation documents for their systems. Systems without accreditation documents will be treated as non-government visitors. A non-ERDC employee or non-government visitor should never be hardwire-connected to the ERD network; only a wireless connection is permitted for visitors.

## **Work Orders (Building Maintenance, etc.):**

a. **Movers.** To schedule movers, send an e-mail to Mr. Billy Hall in Logistics and tell him the items to be moved, from and to where (room and building numbers), and the timeframe in

which it must be done. Agree upon a date, provide a job number to pay for it, and Mr. Hall will set up the PR&C.

b. **Maintenance/Repair.** Each building has someone assigned to be responsible for reporting maintenance and repair needs. The branch administrative person is either that designated person or knows who it is.

c. **Cleaning.** Each building has someone assigned to oversee the cleaning contract in that building. The branch administrative person is either that designated person or knows who it is. Please do not deal directly with the Midd-West cleaning team members. Go to the building POC with complaints or a special need. The POCs must sign off, daily, on a checklist. If there is a systemic problem, they can deal with the Midd-West POC. If there is a special need (a conference room cleaned really well because of VIPs), they can deal with the cleaners so that it fits into their schedule better. Do not complain to the cleaning team members; complain to the building POC.

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